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towards one, then towards the other. I mean that they will look at justice and beauty and temperance as they are in nature, and again at the corresponding quality in mankind, and they will inlay the true human image, molding and selecting out of the various forms of life; and this they will conceive according to that other image which, when existing among men, Homer calls the form and likeness of God.

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THE MORAL TRAINING OF THE YOUNG IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.*

There is a familiar story of a husband and a wife in Paris, who, being unable to live happily together, separated. No doubt, there were times when a longing for the bliss of their early married life entered their hearts, but neither expressed to the other a wish for the reunion. Finally, death claimed their only child, who was interred in the beautiful cemetery of Père la Chaise. On a certain day when it was customary to decorate the graves of the beloved dead with flowers, the father of the child selected an hour at which he presumed his wife would not be present. But it happened that, though coming from opposite directions, they met at the grave, and laid their floral tributes upon it. As they turned their eyes, wet with tears, met. In that moment all anger and resentment left their hearts. Their early love revived. They embraced, and over the grave of their dead child, renewed their plighted love, and returned home once more happy and united.

I trust I may be pardoned for discovering in this touching incident a similarity to this assembly, faithful in its attendance at these weekly lectures. The speakers and their auditors entertain divers opinions on all subjects, but particularly so on matters appertaining to religious belief. In this latter respect,

* An address in the Saturday Afternoon Course on the "Moral Training of the Young in Ancient and Modern Times," under the auspices of The Society for Ethical Culture of Philadelphia.

they perhaps stand as far apart as pole from pole, but as the husband and wife were drawn together by the memory of their departed one, so also in the present case is there one dominating influence—not a dead, but a living child, whose welfare and highest interests are the subject of discussion. A happy opportunity is offered to all, irrespective of belief or opinion, without bias or feeling, to hear and to learn what has been done, what is being done, and what may be done by every educational agency for the moral training of the child.

The occasion is an inspiring one. The subject under consideration is important beyond exaggeration. Our country's best interests are concentrated about it; for, as the family is the basic unit of the state, so is the child the basic unit of the family; consequently, his moral training commands the most serious thought of the human mind, since the firmness, solidity and strength of the superstructure are determined by the foundation.

I shall endeavor to contribute a little to the sum of information on this vital topic by making known what the Catholic Church to-day, in the United States, is doing for this moral training. I shall enunciate the principles that underlie the work and shall outline the methods and means which flow logically from the immovable conviction of the truth of those principles.

Perhaps an argumentative, partisan, and dogmatic tone may be noted in my remarks, and the position the Church assumes may be considered exclusive and intolerant; but I beg to assure the assembly that there is not the least intention on my part to contend for the merits of one system of moral training over another. There will be, as I have already said, a simple statement of the pertinent facts and conditions that are found in the Catholic Church of to-day. To describe what takes place in the diocese of Philadelphia for the training of youth, is to tell what is being done in all parts of the United States, although the organized work may perhaps be more effective in one diocese than in another.

All men recognize the necessity of moral training for the young. This is evident by the utterances of men of all ages.

Be a man's personal life what it may, he is anxious to see youth trained to virtue and upright living. Youth is the seed time of virtuous habits, and seldom is a permanent hold kept of any virtue the foundations of which were not laid in early years. Holy Scripture teaches: "It is a proverb: A young man according to his way, even when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs xxii, 6.) Pagan philosophy no less than the Bible emphasizes this truth. Seneca says: "It is necessary to guide tender minds, but very difficult to root up vices which have grown up with us." Quintilian wrote: "The young must be trained and educated, for once evil has taken root, one can easier break than bend."

While there is an agreement as to the necessity and importance of this moral training, there is a difference of opinion as to the time, place, manner, and methods that must be determined. Outside of the Catholic Church it is almost universally agreed that morality is distinct from and independent of religion, and the well-known French philosopher, Alfred Fouillée, does not hesitate to affirm that "the assertion that morality is independent of religion is a point on which nearly all philosophers that deserve the name agree." Positive, sweeping statements are always hazardous—*latet dolus in generalibus*. It may well be questioned whether "all philosophers that deserve the name" hold such an opinion; nevertheless there can be little doubt that many do.

It is also widely believed by those who distinguish between morality and religion, that morality should be left to the day school, while religion should be the concern of the church and family.

The Catholic Church contends that morality and religion are not independent, but that religion is the basis of morality, and that consequently religion and morality are inseparable. She holds that as ever and always the child's soul and his duties to God are the highest and greatest, so there is no place, time, or method from which the teaching of morals and religion may be eliminated. She holds that as the knowledge of the relations of the creature to his Creator is the most sacred and essential of all subjects, the most imperative of all obligations,

these relations should receive at least as much attention as is given to any secular branch; that as a child cannot become proficient in reading, writing, or arithmetic without daily instructions therein, so neither can he require the necessary knowledge of God, His rewards, His punishments, without the daily presentation of these truths.

The principal, though not the exclusive agencies employed in our educational work are: First, the Church; second, the family; third, the Sunday school; lastly, the parish school.

The first and greatest power is the Church, which through her teaching body, the bishops and priests, gives vitality, structure, and support to the whole educational organization. Other agencies may come and go, may be effective or otherwise, but surviving them all, and always at work, is the Church with the divine commission which she claims to teach the Way and the Truth and to manifest the Light. She proclaims through her ministry the existence of God, the principles of right conduct, the responsibility and accountability of man to a higher infinite Power, the existence of heaven and hell, and the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice. She summons to her aid other agencies to render these saving truths the more effective. Hence she emphasizes the obligations of parents to care for the child, declaring that first and before all other teachers come the father and mother, for as they are the willing instruments of bringing children into the world, the duty devolves upon them of looking to the material, mental, and moral well-being of their young charges. She recalls that they have received a divine command to teach and guide their offspring, reminding them in the words of Chrysostom, that they should be apostles to their children, that their house should be a church; and insisting that children's education should be effected by example as well as by precept.

The first Plenary Council of Baltimore, consisting of archbishops and bishops and forming the highest legislative body of the Church in the United States, uses strong language to impress upon Catholic parents their great responsibility: "To you, Christian parents," it proclaims, "God has committed his children, whom He permits you to regard as yours; and your

natural affection towards them must ever be subordinate to the will of Him from Whom all paternity in heaven and in earth is named.

“Remember that if for them you are the representatives of God, the source of their existence, you are to be for them depositories of His authority, teachers of His law, and models, by imitating which they may be perfect, even as their Father in heaven is perfect. You are to watch over the purity of their faith and morals with zealous vigilance, and to install into their young hearts principles of virtue and perfection.”

Mighty, indeed, is the influence of a true father and a true mother. That the memory of such is a helpful, restraining power in the time of trial and temptation has been publicly acknowledged by many a youth. Sad experience has often demonstrated that where the parents fail in their duty, the efforts of other agencies are oftentimes futile and unsuccessful. Incidentally, I may remark that in many of our Catholic parishes there are organized societies, associations of “Christian Parents,” at whose regular meetings special instruction is given in regard to parental obligations, and thereby, indirectly, the moral training of the young is looked after; for there can be no question as to the immense advance secured for the welfare of our boys and girls when parents possess a right understanding of their duties and responsibilities. Ignorance of how to train their children rather than malicious neglect is the most common cause of children wandering in the ways of iniquity.

To supplement the work of the Church and the home, comes the Sunday school, the primary function of which is the teaching of the “catechism”—an elementary, concise, and systematic presentation of the doctrines of faith and morals.

The Catholic Church has always emphasized the work of the Sunday school. “Several Synods in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in Hungary, France, and Italy, ordain that on Sundays and feast-days parents shall bring their children from seven to fourteen years of age to Church in order to be instructed in the Catholic faith.” (“Introduction to Spirago’s Method of Chris. Doc.,” p. 8.) The Council of Trent, St. Charles Borromeo, Popes Clement VIII, Benedict

XIII and Benedict XIV, the numerous sodalities of Christian doctrine, and the many Provincial Councils, East and West, unanimously proclaim the traditional rule of teaching the children the Christian doctrine on Sundays and feast days. (Ibidem, p. 9.)

The Council of Trent is very explicit in the matter. It ordained "that not only shall the people in church be taught the Sacred Scripture and the Divine Law on all Sundays and feast days, and during Lent and Advent on every day (or at least on three week days), but pastors 'shall also, at least on Sundays and holy days, teach the children of every parish the rudiments of faith, obedience to God and their parents.'" ("Spirago's Method of Chris. Doc.," p. 38.)

There was a period, however, in the history of the Church in the United States when priests were few and Catholics widely scattered, so that the work of religious and moral training was of necessity done almost entirely by the Church and the home. As the Church grew the organized Sunday school came into existence. The Provincial Council of Baltimore (1829) decreed N. 29: "Let parents see to it according to the decree of the same synod (Trent) that on the same days (Sundays and feasts), or at other opportune times, the untaught children be instructed in the rudiments of faith."

The Sunday school, where it exists at present, is conducted after the following manner: It includes the children from the ages of five and six to the ages of fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen. The teachers are usually lay persons organized into what is termed a Christian Doctrine Society. The supervision of the school is by the priest. The time of meeting is Sunday morning or Sunday afternoon. The session is about an hour's duration.

The study of the catechism is the principal purpose of the Sunday school. For the older children classes may be formed for the study of a higher catechism of the Bible, or of a summary thereof known as "Bible History." A portion of the allotted time for Sunday school may be set aside for a simple instruction by the priest on some commandment of God, or on some doctrinal practice of the Church.

The next most important agency in the moral training of the young is the parish school, a factor that has somewhat minimized the necessity of the Sunday school. Although splendid service is being done and was done by the latter institution—more so in the past, perhaps, than in the present—the Church realized as time went on that something more was necessary in order to provide adequately for the moral and religious training of the children. She recognized that the home did not always fulfil its responsibilities; and actual experience showed that the Sunday school, as ordinarily conducted, was oftentimes inefficient by reason of the want of knowledge and training on the part of the teacher, the little time allotted for the work, the indifference of the children in regard to regular attendance, the inability of the priest by reason of other pressing duties to superintend properly. These and other difficulties rendered the work unsatisfactory.

A non-Catholic publication, the *Biblical World* (October, 1902), in speaking of the prevailing conditions, expressed clearly and accurately the state of affairs that confronted the Catholic Church in times gone by: "Is this primary mission (of teaching religion and morality) being adequately performed through the Sunday school and the home? It has been so assumed, but each passing year shows more clearly that this is not the case. Further, there is a growing judgment of Christian people that adequate instruction in religion and morality cannot be given in the Sunday school and the home alone. . . . Since only a limited number of children attend Sunday school, or live in homes where real religion and morality are found, it has resulted that the *great majority* of children have been growing up without essential religious and ethical education."

Hence, as far back as 1829, the Church, in the first Provincial Council of Baltimore, enunciated her policy in regard to the need and establishment of parish schools, where by the aid of trained teachers, secular, religious, and moral education should go hand in hand for the perfecting of soul and mind. Each succeeding Plenary Council, that of 1852, of 1866, and of 1884, reaffirmed and emphasized the doctrine of the first Council,

and each has developed on broader lines the legislation of its predecessors in regard to this important subject of the moral training of the young. There is no mistaking the explicit and mandatory character of the law enacted by the last Plenary Council, that parish schools must be everywhere established.

By reason of this conciliar legislation, the parish school has become an integral, I had almost said a vital part of the Catholic Church organization in the United States; for, excepting where local conditions render it impossible, every parish has its school. To summarize the latest statistics of parish school education, there are about 4,000 parish schools, and about 1,000,000 children receiving their religious, moral, and secular knowledge under strictly Catholic influence.

The diocesan schools of Philadelphia, according to the latest report, number 113, and contain almost 50,000 children. The course of study is uniform, and practically the same as that of the schools of all our large cities. The governing body of the system is the Diocesan School Board, composed of clergymen who have been chosen for their practical interest in educational work. The president is Archbishop Ryan, whose intellectual attainments and broad educational views are universally recognized. Coming into personal contact with the working of the schools, is the superintendent, aided by inspectors. These latter, twelve in number, are appointed by the various religious teaching orders. The teachers of our schools have been trained for their work in the normal schools of the different communities. These teachers are, generally, men and women who, dominated by the conviction that the Providence which shapes their destiny has adapted them to this special work, consecrate their property, talents, and lives to its pursuance as to a labor of love, with no thought of personal compensation, or any intention of ever turning from their chosen work, save when declining years or loss of health will remove them from the field.

It will be obvious to every thinking person that the very presence of these teachers in the school room must have a wholesome influence upon the lives and morals of the young. For there is scarcely a more practical illustration of self-sacri-

fice than that exhibited by these religious teachers. Many of them, reared in comfort, leave home, relatives and friends, and, renouncing the legitimate pleasures of the world, hide under an assumed name all traces of their family—and all this without hope of earthly honor or reward. Aside from the view that any one might hold concerning the wisdom of such a life, no one, I think, can fail to recognize the sincerely earnest effort to reach the sublime ideal taught by the Saviour: "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Hence it would seem impossible for any thinker to deny or to seek to minimize the fact that a system of education under such influences and as widespread as the country itself and ever keeping pace with each phase of its development, could not but be productive of the best results, and must necessarily be an important factor in the life, civilization, and progress of the United States.

Perhaps a brief summary of the manner in which religious and moral instruction is imparted in our parish schools may be of some interest.

Every session is opened and closed with a brief prayer; every hour, at a given signal, the work of the school is momentarily interrupted and the children are taught to raise their hearts to God in silent aspiration.

The catechism of Christian Doctrine in its elementary form in the lower classes, in its more extended form in the upper, is an integral part of the daily curriculum, unless where it gives place to the lessons in the Bible History or the Bible itself. Church History is added to the course in the higher classes.

In the primary grades, both the catechism and Bible History are taught orally; in many schools, objectively, for we are aiming to make this most essential part of the religious training as attractive at least as are the other branches. This we try to do by the use of sandboard, blackboard objects, and illustrations, so that in the hands of efficient teachers the abstract truths of religion and morality are brought within the more easily apprehended domain of the concrete.

The elementary catechism and the oral Bible lessons are completed in four years; the text-book of Bible History is taken

up in the fifth and continued to the eighth year. In this last year of the ordinary school course and in the senior department also, we use a tabulated scheme or outline, which the pupils follow by using the Bible itself, mainly the New Testament.

Throughout all the classes, the Liturgy of the Church is taught systematically; in the primary grades by oral instruction, by pictures, and objects; later, by use of a text-book. The object of this is to give the children an intelligent appreciation of those external ceremonies of the Church which, to the well-instructed, are so deeply significant of interior worship, and so helpful to spiritual culture.

Hand in hand with this religious instruction goes the scheme of moral training, in which the moral and civic virtues are taught in their relation to our fellow-men, as based not only on justice, honesty, and general probity, but also on the firmer and more assured dictates of divine law, so that the pupils may become imbued with the feeling that while it is dishonorable and disgraceful to lie, to cheat, to defraud their neighbor, to give way to the passions that degrade them in the sight of their fellows, it is far more criminal to act thus in the sight of the Lord their God, whose image in themselves they by their evil acts deform and disgrace. We teach them, too, that such violations of the divine law will entail misery and unhappiness not only in the present life, but if unrepented of and unatoned for, eternal misery in the life to come hereafter. We teach that while there is a heaven to reward the good, there is also a hell for the deliberate evil-doer. "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom"; but we inculcate filial and not servile fear, though indeed it cannot be denied that in many cases the dread of future punishment is the only influence that can quell the turbulence of passion. It is, therefore, on motives both natural and supernatural—not either alone, but both together and inseparable—that we base our whole scheme of moral training for the young.

In addition to the means already indicated, we gather the children, according to their ages, into various religious societies, in which, while the social element is also included, we hold

before them ideals on which they may perfect their moral life. The young children we form into an association known as the "Sodality of the Infant Jesus," to induce them to think of and to imitate the virtue of the Child-God, who went down to Nazareth with His parents and "was subject to them."

Children somewhat older enter into what is called the "Angels' Sodality," that they may seek the protection of "their angels who always see the face of their Father who is in heaven," and under the influence of this spiritual presence may be urged to innocence and candor of conduct.

For the children of thirteen or fourteen there are two other societies; that for the boys being called (from the patron of youth) the "Saint Aloysius," that for the girls the "Sodality of the Children of Mary," the Virgin Mother, "our tainted nature's solitary boast." The aim is here to impress on the children of both sexes at the most critical period of their lives ideals and examples of self-restraint and moral purity.

These different societies assemble together at regular intervals, and there is a consecutive and systematic order of promotion from one to the other.

One of the first and strongest forces for the development of character, for the uprooting of vice and the preservation of virtue in our children, is the Sacrament of Penance, better known by the term "Confession." While from the pulpit on Sunday, as well as in the class-room, the priest and teacher may enunciate the precepts of right living, may warn the child against vice, may point out the path of virtue, may appeal to all the motives, natural and supernatural, of moral conduct, yet it is clear that all such instruction must needs be of a somewhat general nature, and that the individual may or may not apply the lesson to himself. But when the child (after being properly instructed as to the nature of "Confession," the manner of making it, and its sacred character) comes to manifest the sins of which he is guilty, and reveals his heart as on due scrutiny it is known to himself—then comes the favorable moment for the priest to give specific advice. He and the individual are alone; and the admonitions, the exhortations, the warnings, the instructions, reach the very soul that stands in

need of them, with the result that habits of sin are prevented, and the seeds of virtue planted.

The practice of Confession is begun as soon as the child is able to distinguish between right and wrong; and four times a year he presents himself until he reaches the age of eleven or twelve, when it becomes a monthly practice, and as years go on, very frequently a fortnightly or a weekly practice. At this age there comes, in conjunction with the Confession, the reception of the Holy Eucharist, when the child, according to Catholic teaching, enters into an actual personal union with God. The visible, tangible fruits of public preaching are often far from encouraging, but the effects of Confession and Sacramental Communion upon the hearts of children are manifested daily in the strengthening of the conscience and the upbuilding of character.

After a personal experience of twenty years in dealing with children in this most sacred and intimate relation, I can testify to the wholesome, elevating and preventive influence of this practice—its potency in deterring from vice and in fostering virtue. Parents, even should they be negligent themselves in this respect, manifest the greatest solicitude when preparing their little ones for the reception of these two Sacraments, and their deepest concern is that their children shall go regularly and frequently to Confession and Communion.

Those in charge of our institutions notice an immediate change in the conduct of the inmates as soon as the practice of Confession is begun. Invaluable testimony on this point is offered by Reverend Mother Katharine Drexel. As you probably know, this lady, a daughter of the late Francis Drexel, is devoting her fortune and life to the education of the negro and Indian. At her invitation, many earnest and self-sacrificing women have joined in this high endeavor. The quaint architectural style of the buildings at Cornwells, in which she and her associates are pursuing their noble work, attracts the attention of the traveler on the New York branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad. These ladies are unreserved in their statement that Confession renders the children more obedient, more docile, more earnest in the correction of their faults and in the

acquisition of good habits. That such effects should follow might be anticipated in view of the continuous insistence which we place upon the fact that Confession is no mere external ceremony, no mere lip service, but a sincere acknowledgment of evil-doing accompanied by sorrow for the wrong, and a determination to do better, together with a firm resolve to repair any injury done to another in his property or character.

Those who view the Catholic system from the outside are likely to be impressed by what may seem to them three inherent weaknesses. My position here as expositor rather than apologist forbids my paying more than a passing attention to these objections.

It may seem to some that instruction in the special doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church dominate and control our religious and moral training. On the other hand, it should be remembered that our work in religious and moral training is not mere doctrinal instruction. It is Christian *practice*. It is the Christian *life*, moral as well as mental, of the child that is sought as the end and object of doctrinal teaching. Doctrinal instruction lays the foundation; and it is, therefore, necessary to impart a knowledge of the Christian system. But practice holds no less essential a place, being the material art by which the whole structure of Christian virtue is erected. We aim to keep before the youth the important truth that the practice of religion, the obedience and respect for authority, human and divine, kindness in speech and conduct, a polite deportment, are not solely for the school room or when under the eye of the teacher, but for all times and all places without distinction.

It may also be said that the system makes overmuch of sanctions, and appeals excessively to the hope of reward and the fear of punishment. We by no means deny that there are many persons who lead noble lives without being dominated by either of these so-called hedonistic motives, and that the consciousness of duty fulfilled seems to be the animating principle of their lives. Blessed are such men and women! Mighty and strong, they remind us of the rock-bound coast that neither the frowns nor the smiles of the ocean disturb. On the other hand, we contend that a moral code, to be effective,

must be suited to the highest and lowest, the cultured and the rude, the educated and the illiterate. It must view man as he is—not in the ideal only. It must stimulate to virtue not only those who are responsive to high influences, whose environment is happy and healthful, but also and above all, it must be able to restrain those who are frenzied by passion and the buffets of fortune. We admit that the motive of fear is an inferior motive. But neither does the Catholic Church urge it as the primary motive for virtue. But we claim, taking human nature as it is, that it will hold a man from crime when higher motives fail; and that when the onslaught of passion is over, it predisposes him to rise to higher things.

While the special tenets and practices of the Catholic Church are taught in our school, yet our system rests on the principle that the more faithful a Catholic is to his religion, the more loyal he will be to the laws of the land. The God-fearing man must necessarily be the upright law-abiding citizen. God and Fatherland are the dominant notes of Catholic teaching. If any one bearing the name of Catholic be found a law-breaker or a traitor, he is Catholic but in name; and as he breaks the laws of the land, so does he ruthlessly defy the teaching of the Church whose name he bears.

It is sometimes said that our system makes good churchmen, but not good Christians. The accusation points out a danger that we are not unwilling to recognize. There is little doubt that often the achievement falls short of the effort. The Church laments that more gratifying results do not flow from her teaching. But it should be remembered that every system depends upon its agents to make it effective. These human means may not fulfil at times the measure of their responsibility; nor should it be forgotten that universal success is not necessary to prove the soundness of principles and methods. Indeed, the merit of any principle is rarely determined by tangible results.

In conclusion, I might say that it has come to pass to-day in the United States that the moral training of the young in the Catholic Church is being concentrated in the parish school. It is the most highly organized, and consequently the most

potent educational agency to make up for the deficiency of the home and the Sunday school. No sinister, selfish motive, however, has brought it into existence, with its curriculum of secular knowledge and a definite place in that curriculum for religious instruction. We are convinced that the salvation and true welfare of the Catholic child depend upon his being well-grounded in the principles of religion and the laws of right living. As Brother Azarias, one of our ablest educators, has said :

“We do not hold that religion can be imparted as is the knowledge of history or grammar. The repetition of the catechism or the reading of the Gospel is not religion. Religion is something more subtle, more intimate, more all-pervading ; it speaks to the heart and the head ; it is an ever-living presence in the school room ; it is reflected from the pages of our reading books. It is nourished by the prayers with which our daily exercises are opened and closed ; it is brought in to control the affections ; to keep watch over the imagination ; it forbids to the mind any but useful, holy, and innocent thoughts ; it enables the soul to resist temptation, it guides the conscience, inspires horror for sin, and love of virtue. It must be an essential element of our lives, the very atmosphere of our breathing, the soul of every action.

“This is religion as the Catholic Church understands it, and this is why she seeks to foster the religious spirit in every soul confided to her, at all times, under all circumstances, without rest, without break, from the cradle to the grave.”

PHILIP R. McDEVITT.

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, PHILADELPHIA.